

Sweet tooth satisfied to the full

About 13 million Euros invested in building new Slutsk Sugar Factory

By Andrey Butrimovich

Just a few centuries ago, only the rich could afford such luxuries as sugar. Today, of course, no home is without it. Belarus makes granulated and cubed sugar, at its four factories. Slutsk Sugar Factory is considered to be among the largest, providing a quarter of the entire volume consumed domestically; its produce is also exported to 15 countries, near and far.

Slutsk Sugar Factory is now be-

ing modernised, with a new factory built, at a cost of nearly 13 million Euros, paid for from bank loans and the enterprise's own funds. German equipment for processing sugar beet is being installed, alongside a Dutch line for pressed sugar, and new robotised lines for prepacking and packing, explains Director Nikolay Prudnik. He tells us, "Our warehouse is never full, since our sugar goes directly to customers in Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and the Baltic states."



New plant in Slutsk packs 350 tonnes of sugar a day

Feeling at home among strangers

Do we prefer imported or domestic goods?



Buyers appreciate apples grown in Belarus

By Alexander Venkovsky

According to official statistics for the first nine months of the year, 72 percent of shop sales have comprised domestic goods, with the figure rising to 83 percent for foodstuffs. It's no surprise, since we are known for producing foods of high quality and in the necessary volumes. Many of us truly prefer the taste of domestic sausages, yoghurts, eggs and other groceries. Of course, we also have the choice of buying foreign-branded confectionery and real Italian spaghetti but most choose less expensive pasta

over imported varieties.

Most of the vegetables sold in Belarusian shops are home-grown but only 10 percent of fruits are local. Obviously, citrus fruits and bananas simply do not grow in our climate but apples could be farmed successfully with some effort. As yet, Belarusian varieties remain inferior to those from abroad: from Poland and Spain. In order to compete, we need not only to grow tasty varieties but to create appropriate conditions for storage, to avoid crop damage or rot.

Improved living standards are leading Belarusians to spend a greater propor-

tion of their income on non-foodstuffs and to buy a larger share of more expensive imports. Of course, this means that home producers need to remain competitive, or they may lose some of their market share. If our enterprises sell less, they earn less, which brings less tax income into the treasury and, eventually, generates a negative foreign trade balance. Recently, the Head of the Government, Mikhail Myasnikov, admitted that economic regulation is needed at local and central level, in order to reduce the outflow of currency from the country.

Working together, we can truly tackle any challenge

By Andrey Smirnov

Belarus and the Kaliningrad Region eager to increase turnover to \$500 million

Belarus has been liaising with the most western region of the Russian Federation across various spheres: trade, tourism, sport and culture. Of course, we are keen to raise revenue generated from exports, with goods turnover

between the Kaliningrad Region and Belarus rising 70 percent this year alone: to almost \$200 million. Without doubt, more can yet be achieved, as Piotr Prokopovich, the Deputy Prime Minister of Belarus, emphasises. Following his trip to Kaliningrad, he tells us, "Over the next two or three years, we intend to increase goods turnover to \$500 million. We'll not only sell goods and services, but

create joint ventures in the Kaliningrad Region and in Belarus."

The Governor of the Kaliningrad Region, Nikolay Tsukanov, notes the successful development of trade and economic cooperation with Belarus, and has invited Belarusian experts to participate in various joint projects, such as the building of sites for the 2018 World Football Championship in the region.

Recycling of waste is already bringing savings

By Yuri Chernyakevich

Sorting station for solid municipal waste launched in Kobrin, with equipment supplied jointly by European Union and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Modern day consumption and our 'throw-away' attitude renders most things redundant with time, bringing the problem of land-fill sites near cities. Recycling is part of the solution, with ever more courtyards being equipped with collection containers for glass, paper and plastic. Each is placed separately, with food waste having a different bin altogether.

Some domestic waste is being burnt at power stations but much can be recycled for future use, as being explored in the Brest Region's Kobrin and the Grodno Re-



Process of sorting

gion's Mosty. The project is being funded by the EU and UNDP at a cost over two million Euros. Kobrin's sorting station for solid municipal waste uses a sorting line, a crushing device and a perforator for cutting PET bottles. Moreover, local utility providers have received a compact loader with a com-

plete set of rigging and several garbage trucks. A new landfill site meeting modern requirements for waste recycling is also being designed for the area.

This is the second stage of the project for Kobrin, which received garbage trucks and bulldozers worth about \$600,000, alongside hundreds of separate collecting containers last November, for local housing and public utilities.

The results are already being seen, with recycling collection having doubled on last year in the Kobrin District and the volume of landfill rubbish having halved. Fuel consumption by garbage trucks has also fallen. Sergey Yelets, the Director of Kobrin Housing and Public Utilities, notes that the economic benefits are evident, being worth hundreds of millions of Roubles annually. Of course, this is only the beginning.